

The Hope of the Righteous at DEATH.

239. A FUNERAL
SERMON
Occasion'd by the DECEASE
Of the Late Worthy
Mr. HUGH FRASER, Merch^t.

Preach'd at

Stoke - Newington,

February the 17th. 1717. X

By SAMUEL ROSEWELL, A.M.

Publish'd at the Desire of the Relations
of the Deceased.

L O N D O N :

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Історія

Історія Угорської Держави від початку до 1848 року

Історія Угорської Держави від початку до 1848 року

в 12 томах



Історія Угорської Держави від початку до 1848 року

TO

MR. and MRS.

HONYWOOD,

OF

Stoke-Newington.

Worthy and Honour'd Friends,



I your Request I preach'd
and now publish this Dis-
course; in which I have
endeavour'd to offer such
Considerations to your
Thoughts, as may serve
to comfort you, under the present afflictive
Providence, and to assist you in making a due
Improvement of it. I am very sensible of

the greatness of your Loss, and heartily sympathize with you. Your honoured Father, Mr. Frazer, had drawn me into an intimate Acquaintance with himself for several Years pass'd; which gave me Occasion to observe of him, that he was an excellent Person, truly pious, and deservedly esteem'd in the several Relations in which he stood. I chose to bring the Account I was to give of him in the Sermon, into as narrow a Compass as conveniently I could. And when we have full Evidence, that he lived the Life of the Righteous, and that his last End was like unto his; What have we to wish for more? What greater Things can be said? What can better recommend Him, or be a greater Satisfaction to You, when thinking of him?

IT was my Desire, that this Work should have devolv'd upon either of Two of my worthy Brethren, who are better qualify'd for it, and to whom, I apprehended it did more particularly belong. This was the only Reason that put me upon excusing myself from it at first, and would have prevail'd with me not to have undertaken it, had not they absolutely declin'd

it, (not out of the least Disrespect to any, but) for some particular Reasons they mention'd.

THAT the good Spirit of GOD may render this Discourse a Word in season to yourselves, and hereafter useful to your hopeful Posterity; and that the Blessings of the Everlasting Covenant may be entail'd on you and them, is the earnest Desire and Prayer, of

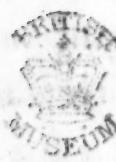
SIR and MADAM,

your very Humble

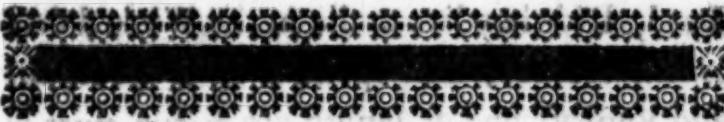
and Obedient Servant,

Token-House-Yard,
March 4, 1747.

Samuel Rosewell.



if it indeed be true, that a Righteous
man liveth to see his day come, then go



PROV. XIV. 32. Latter Part.

*The Righteous hath Hope
in his DEATH.*



UCH is the Happy Condition of *Good Men* while they live, and when they come to die, that a due Reflection on this will afford seasonable Relief and Strong Consolati-

on, while we are mourning over them as gone from us, and remov'd out of our World. What quieting, yea, what chearing Considerations may be inferr'd from hence; My dear departed Friend or Relative, was a righteous Man? That is, He lived the Life of the Righteous; and as the certain Consequence of that, he *died the Death of the Righteous*, and he had *Hope in his Death*. While David was lamenting Abner's Decease, he pleas'd himself with this Thought; *Died Abner as a Fool* ³³.

Fool dieth ? It is a better Ground for Satisfaction and Joy, when we are able to say of our Dead, Did they live or die as the Wicked do ? as the Wicked, who spend their Days in Sin and Vanity, and at length are *driven away in their Wickedness* ; for that is their End ; as the wise Author of this Book observes before the Text. *The Wicked is driven away in his Wickedness* : It immediately follows, *But the Righteous hath Hope in his Death*. That he seems to design this Passage as a Recommendation of a religious Course, from a Consideration of the different Ends of wicked and of righteous Men. The present Providence has directed my Thoughts to the latter of these ; and to that I shall now confine myself.

THE Words are an entire Proposition, and there is no need to vary the Form of it. *The Righteous hath Hope in his Death*. — In which there is observable,

First, THE Subject ; or Person spoken of, who is specify'd by his distinguishing Character, *The Righteous*. And,

Secondly, THE Truth that is asserted concerning him — *Hath Hope in his Death*.

First, To

§. 18, To the former of these, I propose to say but little at present ; this descriptive Character of good Men coming frequently under Consideration, and having been well and largely explain'd by Many. I shall only observe, That

IN Point of *Justification*, we are made Rom. v.
righteous by the Obedience of Christ. He is made ^{19.}
of G O D unto us *Righteousness* ; and is express- ^{1 Cor. i.}
ly call'd the L O R D our RIGHTEOUSNESS. All ^{30.}
which Expressions do plainly signify, that ^{6.}
the *Righteousness of Christ* is some Way or
other *imputed* to us, and made ours. This is
our only *meriting Righteousness* ; and holy
Souls refer themselves to it, and depend on
it as such. But there is besides this,

THE Righteousness of *Sanctification*, as it
is sometimes call'd ; which includes the in-
ternal and imparted Principle of Holiness,
and all the blessed Fruits and Products of it in
a Course of Obedience to G O D, or Con-
formity to his Law. This is the Righteousness
that qualifies the Persons intended in the
Text, wherein you see they are opposed to
the Wicked, mention'd in the former Part of
the Verse ; and these respective Denomina-
tions, are design'd to distinguish them from,
and to oppose them to, each other by the
contrary Bent and Tenor of their Hearts and
Lives.

RIGHTEOUSNESS being a *relative Term*, has a Respect to some Constitution or Law, as its Measure and Rule; and by acquainting ourselves with that, we come to know what Righteousness is; it being a Conformity to that Law to which it is referr'd. Under the *Law of Works*, it was spotless Innocency, or sinless Obedience; in which Sense, *There is none righteous, no not One*. Under the *Gospel-Constitution*, which is call'd the *Law of Faith*, it is *sincere, tho' imperfect Obedience*; while we consider it not merely as a *Law or Rule of Life*, because as such it requires perfect Obedience too; but with respect to its *Sanctification*, and as a *gracious Covenant*; for so it admits of *Sincerity* as the Term of Salvation. In this Sense, St. John describes a righteous Man, and introduces the Description in a

^{1 Joh. iii.} remarkable Manner: *Let no Man deceive you, for that doth Righteousness, is righteous.*

^{7.} And this is the Sense, in which Zachariah and

^{Luke i. 6.} Elizabeth are said to be *righteous, walking in all the Ordinances and Commandments of the L O R D blameless*. This is the Righteousness which does characterize and distinguish the Persons whom G O D does accept and justify for C H R I S T's Sake; for the Apostle informs

^{Rom. ii.} us, That *the Doers of the Law shall be justify'd.*

^{13.} G O D does not justify wicked, or ungodly Persons, while they continue such; but as be-

come

come holy or righteous, in the Sense that has now been given. In short then, The Righteous is One, who not only renders to every Man his Due, (which is a more strict and restrained Notion of Righteousness; and but one particular Branch of it, when consider'd more largely) but he is in all Respects a religious, and a truly good Man; the same who is frequently describ'd and recommended in Scripture, under the Character of *the Upright*, and of One *who walketh uprightly*. I proceed to

§. 2d, THE Truth that is asserted concerning him, and that is, That he *bath Hope in his Death*. Here it is *imply'd*, that the Righteous die as well as others. Righteous Men, are but Men; and as such they have the *natural Cause* of Death in themselves. Their Bodies are made out of the Dust, and their Constitutions are frail and mortal like other Mens. Yea, they have also the *moral Cause* of Death within them; *Death passes upon all Men, because all have sinned*; and it does so by Virtue of the divine Ordination and Decree: *It is appointed unto Men once to die*. And Experience has confirm'd the Truth in every Age. Righteous *Abel*, righteous *Abraham*, righteous *Lot*, righteous *Noah*; and every Generation of the Righteous hitherto, have

submitted to Death. Your Fathers, where are they? And the Prophets, do they live for ever? CHRIST, who came to deliver the Persons of this Character from the Sting of Death and from the Wrath to come, and to purchase for them Life and Immortality in the heavenly State, never pretended to save them from natural Death. This is no where mention'd as a Privilege of the Covenant of Grace; nor was it ever understood to be so. But tho' they die as well as others, yet they die not as do others; they die not in the Manner of the Wicked, who are driven away in their Wickedness; but They have Hope in their Death.

IN the further Prosecution of this Truth I shall,

I. DISCOURSE of the righteous Man's Hope in Death.

II. EVINCE the Truth of the Observation in the Text.

III. OBSERVE, that the Emphasis of it lies in this special Season of his Hope, (the Time of his Death) and enquire why it does so. And then,

IV. APPLY these Things.

I. I AM to Discourse of the righteous Man's Hope in Death. Here let us consider a little the more general Nature of *Hope*, which may be thus describ'd; *Hope is a well-grounded Expectation of some future Good*. It is some *Good*, or at least Something that comes under the Appearance of *Good*, and is consider'd as such, that is its *Object*: For whatever we expect under the Notion of an *Evil*, is the Matter of *Fear*, and not of *Hope*. And this *Good* is distant or *future*: For *Hope*, properly speaking, has a Reference to Something that is not yet attain'd; we are not suppos'd to have *that* in Possession, that we are hoping for; which is also imply'd in the expecting or looking for it. The Apostle observes, That *Hope which is seen, is not Hope*; for what a Man Rom. viii. sees, (i. e. actually enjoys) *why doth he yet hope*²⁴ for it? The *Expectation* of this future *Good*, implies an inward Persuasion of its real Existence, or that it is Somewhat that may be attained to hereafter: For we do not expect any Thing that we are persuaded is not; or is never to be had. And it also includes such Desires after it as are attended with a pleasing Prospect of having them gratify'd. Which last Clause, distinguishes *Hope* from mere *Desire*, and raises it above it: For Persons may *desire* that which they have no *Prospect* of ever attaining to; but

but they cannot properly be said to *expect* or *hope* for it, without some such Prospect. I add further, That it is a *well-grounded* *Expectation*; to distinguish it from that which is not a *genuine* *Hope*; but a mere *Presumption*. For what is it to *presume*, but to *expect* some future *Good* without any just and reasonable *Ground* to do so?

Now from this more general Description of *Hope*, we shall be led into the following Enquiries.

First, *WHAT* is that *future Good* that the Righteous *expect* at the Time of their Death? Or, What are the *Objects* of their *Hope* at that solemn Season?

Secondly, *WHAT* are the *Grounds* which support the *Expectation* which they then entertain; and that make it appear to be no *Presumption*?

Thirdly, *WHAT Sort* of an *Expectation* is it? Or, what are the *recommending Properties* of such a *Hope* as this?

First, *WHAT* is that *future Good* that the Righteous *expect* at the Time of their Death? Or, What are the *Objects* of their *Hope* at that solemn Season?

Now

Now these may be consider'd, both as they respect *Themselves*, and as they respect *Others*. The Text does principally design the *Former*; but it may be of Use, upon such an Occasion as this, to take some Notice of the *Other* too.

§. 1st, *With respect to Themselves.* And here more generally.

THEY *Hope*, That whatever there may be in Dying and in Death itself, that is disagreeable and grievous to Nature; that yet upon the whole Matter, and in the final Issues of Things, it shall be no real Detriment, but a great and unspeakable Advantage to them.

How seldom is it that righteous Men themselves can forbear to discover that there is Something in Dying that makes Nature reluctant; and is shocking to them? Death is generally introduc'd by such Harbingers, and attended with such Circumstances, as are for the present grievous and terrible: With Sickness and Pains, which waste and torment the Body, and render it a gastly Spectacle, and an unwieldy Burden. It dissolves the most intimate Union in Nature; and makes a wide Separation betwixt two closely united and much endear'd Colleagues, the Soul and the Body. It transmits the one into Eternity; whither it goes uncloath'd and

much

much a Stranger: While it turns the *other* to Dust and Corruption; into Food for Worms, who *after his Skin will destroy his Flesh*. It forces him hence, dispossess'd of all his goodly Possessions; for as he *brought nothing into the World*, so he *can carry nothing out of it*. He must bid a final Farewel to all the *sublunary Good* he was wont to please himself with, and to take delight in. He *leaves* his Estate, (for that's the Report that is wont to be made of the richest Mortals when they are dead, they *left* so many Thousands.) He looks about him when dying, and says, (at least within himself) This Place, this pleasant Habitation will know me no more. And to Many the most afflictive Circumstance of all is, the Removal from *the Desire of their Eyes*, and from what has sometimes engross'd their Hearts, their beloved Friends and Relations. Their Affection to these, is wont to prevail at a great Rate, and the inordinate degrees of it, are some of the last Things that are conquer'd, and that only by Death itself. With what Reluctancy are those Words spoken, *We must part?* And, tho' it may be add'd by way of Relief, it is a Separation for a little Time only; yet it is a Separation, and such an one as Death makes.

THESE are some Things in Dying and in Death itself, that are very disagreeable and grievous

grievous to Nature ; but notwithstanding these, the Christian has good *Hope* that upon the Whole, it shall be no real Loss ; but that *to him to die shall be Gain* : That a great Amends will be made him ; and that all this is in order to Something better, Something unspeakably better, than that which appears most desirable and pleasing to him in the present Life. And this *Hope* supports him under the afflictive Part of his Case, and serves to reconcile him to it ; at least in some good Measure. But more particularly,

(1.) *THE Righteous Hope at Death, that they shall be deliver'd from all that Evil by which they then suffer ; or by which they have suffer'd throughout the Time of Life.*

FROM afflictive Evil : Such as the Opposition and Trouble they meet with from wicked Men. They hope they shall soon be out of the Reach of their Enmity and Malice ; and be lodg'd there where the Wicked cease from Troubling. They please themselves with their expected Deliverance from all that *Anguish and Distress of Mind*, which various Occasions have ministred to, and which has sometimes render'd their Lives very tedious and burdensome to them. They *Hope* to be freed from all those grievous *Disturbances*, and those tormenting *Pains* to the Body that have been occasion'd

casion'd by *chronical* or by *acute Distempers*. When Nature has been complaining of its Disorders; and crying out under extremity of Pain, the righteous Man revives himself with this; “Approaching Death will free me from all;” “will lay my weary Body to rest; that after that, I shall no more complain, I am sick, I am pain'd.” When the *Stone*, or *Gout*, the *Colick* or *Strangury*, are doing their worst; when *Consumption*, or *Faudice*, or *Dropsy*, are pulling down the mortal Frame, these serve to quicken his Hope, that e'er long he shall be free from every Thing of that Kind. *The Devil* does sometimes assault a righteous Man when he is dying; and causes some Disturbance to him by his Suggestions, by his Temptations, and by accusing him to his own Conscience: From hence may spring some Doubts and Fears, and melancholy Apprehensions: But in the midst of these he rallies his Hope, his hope that Death will put an End to all his Sufferings of this Sort, and lodge him there where the Enemy of his Peace shall have no Advantage against him.

But *Afflictions* are not the only Evil a dying Christian does hope to get clear of: *Sin* is a more grievous Thing to his righteous Soul than any of these; and is generally most so, when he looks upon himself about to appear

pear before an infinitely Pure and Holy God. Oh, how odious, how abominable a Thing is Sin in the Account of a dying Saint! And by how much the more it is so, by so much the stronger are his Desires to be deliver'd from it; and his Hopes bear a Proportion to those Desires. It would not suffice for him to Hope he shall *suffer* no more, without Ground to expect that he shall *sin* no more; no longer be guilty of any indecent Behaviour toward God; of doing any Thing displeasing to Him, or unworthy of Him; or of violating any Command of His.

AND yet a Deliverance from *both* these, [from Affliction, and from Sin] is not *all* that he hopes for. Thus much he might expect, if Death should annihilate or transmit him into a State of Inaction and Insensibility; and therefore the Hopes of dying Christians rise higher than this: For,

(2.) *THEY HOPE, THAT DEATH WILL TRANSLATE THEM INTO A STATE OF PERFECT HOLINESS, AND OF CONSUMMATE BLISS.* They are looking for the Mercy of the Lord JESUS CHRIST unto eternal Life; and hope that they are going to Him, with whom to be *is far better*: That He will now fulfil that Promise to them, That where Joh. xii. He is, there his Servant shall also be. Finding the earthly House of their Tabernacle dissolving,

they are looking toward *that Building of GOD,* *that House which is not made with Hands, that is eternal in the Heavens.* They entertain a lively Hope of *an Inheritance incorruptible, undefiled, and that fadeth not away; that is reserved in Heaven* for them: That in this blessed State they shall be perfectly conformed to the Will,

¹ Joh. iii. and to the Example of GOD; that they shall be like their LORD, whom they shall see as He is; and that they shall serve Him as glorify'd Saints and Angels do; with the fullest Satisfaction and Joy, and without Intermission, through endless Ages: That they shall love Him at another Rate than ever they have done yet, and never abate of their Love to Him, their Zeal for Him, their Desires after Him: That they shall revere, adore, obey and praise their GOD and their REDEEMER, as they have wish'd to do at those Seasons wherein they were the best dispos'd, and in the most excellent Frame: That they shall be advanc'd to the highest Honours, being glorify'd by CHRIST, and in Him as their Head: That their Faculties shall be enlarg'd, and their Minds illuminated to such a Degree, that they shall know even as they are known: That they shall be admitted to divine Enjoyments, and be possess'd of the most glorious Privileges; those great, those excellent ² things, which GOD hath prepar'd for them who love

love Him; *Things which Eye hath not seen, nor Ear heard, neither have entered into the Heart of Man:* And that there shall be no Interruptions in, nor any Period to their Happiness.

(3.) THEY die in Hope, *That their poor mortal Bodies shall revive, be rais'd again, and be made glorious.* They find them the Subjects of Diseases at present, deform'd by them, and hastning into Corruption: Made to consume and waste by *Consumptions*, discolor'd by Jaundice, or swoln by *Dropsies, &c.* They feel 'em dropping into pieces, and crumbling into Dust; they complain of them as mere unwieldy Lumps, as cold Clods. They foresee, that *after their Skin Worms shall destroy their Flesh:* And yet they die in Hope, ^{Job xix. 26.} that they shall reassume these very Bodies, rebuilt with admirable Beauty, and exceedingly glorious; That tho' they are to dwell *in the Dust* for a Time, they shall *awake and sing*, and their *Dew shall be as the Dew of Herbs, and the Earth shall cast out the Dead:* That the SAVIOUR whom they look for, *the Phil. iii. Lord JESUS CHRIST will change their vile Bodies, that they may be fashioned like unto his glorious Body, according unto the Working whereby He is able even to subdue all Things unto himself:* That therefore they shall be curiously fitted

fitted up, gloriously repair'd, when such Beauty and Splendour is to be wrought into their Complexion, as will render them like unto CHRIST's glorious Body. They resign them to the Dust, in Hope, that tho' they be sown in Dishonour, (*i. e.* vile contemptible Carcases) they shall be raised out of their Corruption and Ashes, with such surprizing Advantage; and that in their *Flesh*, adorn'd with spiritual and celestial Qualities, they shall see GOD, whom they shall see for themselves, and their Eyes shall behold, and not another.

Job xix.
26, 27.

THIS then is the Hope in which they die, with respect to *Themselves*, I observ'd,

§. 2. THERE are some other Objects of their Hopes which respect *Others*.

HERE I might take notice, That they usually entertain, and often express some Hopes with respect to *the Church* and People of GOD in general; and more particularly with Reference to that Part of it amongst which their Lot is cast. And these Hopes are very much directed by the Condition and Circumstances, in which it happens to be at the Time of their Death. They either Hope that GOD will continue it in the flourishing State it may be in; or raise it out of the Distress and Sufferings it may be under.

BUT I choose to take a little more particular

cular Notice of the Hopes they entertain with respect to their dear Descendants, and their other beloved Friends and Relatives, whom they have often committed to God, through JESUS CHRIST, and whom they are now about to leave behind. These have been wont to have a large Share in their Affection and Concern, and do now lie on their Hearts: And they have much Comfort in the good Hopes that they have concerning These, when they are about to take their final Farewel: which are chiefly, as follows:

(1.) THEY HOPE, THAT GOD WILL graciously concern Himself for them, when their own Heads shall be laid in the Dust. They are wont to recommend them to the Care and Protection of Almighty GOD; and they die believing that He will care for them; that He will charge his Providence with them; that He will conduct and lead them through the Duties, the Difficulties, and the Temptations of the remaining Part of their Lives; That his Covenant shall be their Security, and the Blessings of it their Portion: That tho' themselfes are taken off from being further serviceable to them, and instrumental in doing them Good; yet GOD will supply their Absence, and be the Father of the Fatherless; and not only all that they were, but abund-

dantly more than they could be to any of them. We find old Jacob dying in such Gen. Hope as this : *Bebold, I die (says he) but alviii. 21. GOD shall be with you, and bring you again un- to the Land of your Fathers.*

(2.) **T**HEY die in Hope That they shall meet them again e're long, and that they shall live eternally together in Heaven ; That tho' Death separate them, yet it shall not be an everlasting Separation ; but they shall see each other again ; and for ever co-inhabit the blissful Regions, and be ever engag'd in the same Delightful and Angelick Work ; joyntly partaking of the Inheritance of the Saints in Light, and sharing in the same glorious Privileges through endless Ages.

THEY therefore generally die in Hope, [an implicit Hope] that they shall have a distinct, particular Knowledge of one another, when they meet in Heaven. And why should this be discourag'd by any, while so many Arguments may be produc'd in Defence of it? * Will not our Knowledge be greatly increas'd in Heaven? And can we suppose that any Part of that Knowledge

* Some of these Arguments are infisted on by Mr. Baxter, in several Parts of his Works.

that we have attain'd to at present, will cease there; except there be any that implies Imperfection? But what Imperfection can this imply? — We find the Angels of GOD have a distinct Knowledge of particular Saints: For they rejoice in their Conversion: And they have some special Charges with respect to them; in so much that CHRIST himself calls them *their Angels*. And why should not the glorify'd Saints be known to each other, as well as to the Angels; as from thence it seems probable they will be?

— The Disciples who attended our Lord at his *Transfiguration* on the Mount, had the Means of knowing *Moses* and *Elias* when they appear'd so glorious on that great Occasion. And the Parable represents *Abraham* as knowing *Lazarus* in Heaven, and the *rich Man* in Hell; and the latter as knowing both *Abraham* and *Lazarus*. The Scriptures speak of our *sitting down with Abraham, Isaac and Jacob in the Kingdom of GOD*; and is it not highly probable then, that we shall know which are they? The *Apostle* tells the *Thessalonians*, That they would be the *Crown of his Rejoycing in the Presence of our Lord Jesus Christ at his Coming*; when he should behold them own'd by Him and made happy: And does not that imply that he should have a particular and distinct Knowledge of them?

—Is it not likely such Persons as *Adam*, as *Moses*, as *Job*, as *David*, as *Paul*, and many others, will be distinguish'd Above? and that we shall know this is the Man from whom the whole Race descended? and these Others are They of whom we read so much in Scripture-History; who did, and who suffer'd so much for God; and became so famous and so greatly renown'd, not only in their own Day, but in all the after-Ages of the Church? And if I shall know These, why not others who were my intimate Acquaintance, that I may recount with them the Conduct of God towards ourselves in particular, and the other remarkable Things that happen'd on our Earth, while we were *Con-temporaries* in it? Surely we shall carry the Remembrance of such Things into Heaven. And will it not delight ourselves, and redound to the Glory of God to call them over there? —It's certain our Hope of such a distinct Knowledge of each other, renders Heaven more familiar to us at present, and serves to inspire us with some special Ardent of Desire to be there. When *Socrates* was about to drink the deadly Draught, he entertain'd his Friends with a Discourse of the Happiness he had in Prospect, in the Society of *Orpheus*, *Museus*, *Homer*, *Hesiod* and other great and brave Men,

Men, in the State he was entring into ; and told them, he had often wish'd to be there, that he might enjoy such Conversation. And some *Christian Heroes* have talk'd in a noble Strain, with great Elevation of Thought and Warmth of Affection on this Argument. But I'll only add, That whereas the Bodies of the Saints will undergo such great Alterations and Changes, that we are not like to know them but by Inspiration, or by means of an affix'd *notifying Signature*, (as One has express'd it) or by some other Way of Information ; there is no Reason to doubt but *God* will vouchsafe the one or the other.

Now such Things as these, are that *future Good* which the Righteous expect at the Time of their Death ; or these are the *Objects* of their Hope at that solemn Season. I am

2dly, To enquire what are the *Grounds* that support the Hope which they then entertain ; and which distinguish it from a vain, delusive Presumption.

ALL a Christians Hopes that relate to the future Blessedness, have their Foundation in **JESUS CHRIST** : In the infinite Value of that Sacrifice which He once offer'd to *God*, and the Satisfaction and Purchase He made by it : For had not He atoned the

Divine Justice and paid the Price of our Redemption; we must have been without Hope. There would have remain'd nothing more for apostate Men but the being subject to Bondage through Fear of Death; and a certain fearful looking for of Judgment and of fiery Indignation, which should devour them as the Adversaries of GOD. St. Paul therefore says of our

1 Tim. i. 1. Lord JESUS CHRIST, that He is our Hope, i. e. the fundamental Ground of it. And we

1 Pet. i. 3. are said to be begotten again unto a lively Hope by the Resurrection of Jesus Christ from the Dead; signifying that our Hope is built on his Death and Resurrection. But then it is to be observ'd, that what CHRIST has suffer'd, and what He has done without us, is but the more remote Ground of this Hope.

THE nearer and more immediate Support of it is what He has wrought within us: According to that of the Apostle, CHRIST in you the Hope of Glory: Not only CHRIST preach'd amongst you, but living in you by Faith and Holiness. Every righteous Man has received CHRIST JESUS the Lord, who is thereupon said to live in Him; and by his Grace he is enabled to bring forth the Fruits of Righteousness: And by reflecting on these as the Evidence that he is righteous, and that he is interest'd in CHRIST and his Merits, he is encouraged to hope. That which is Matter

of Rejoycing to dying Christians, does greatly support and strengthen their Hopes. Now 2 Cor. i.
their Rejoycing is this, the Testimony of their Con-^{12.}
sciences, that in Simplicity and godly Sincerity;
not with fleshly Wisdom, but by the Grace of God,
they have had their Conversation in the World.
It was a Ground of the Apostle's Hope, that he was able to say, *I have fought a good Fight, 2 Tim. iv.*
I have finished my Course, I have kept the Faith. 7.

THE Promise of GOD is one great Support of the Christian's Hope. *Hope of eternal Life, which GOD who cannot lye promised.* ~ But then, as that is made through CHRIST, 1 Tit. i. 2.
in whom all the Promises are Yea and Amen, 2 Cor. i.
so it is limited to the Persons so and so qualifi-^{13.}
fied: And in short, all the requir'd Qualifi-
cations amount to this, that they be righteous Persons. *The Righteous shall enter into Life eter-*
nal; and the promis'd Resurrection to it, is call'd the Resurrection of the Just. And that all these Promises are to be understood as re-^{14.}
ferring to Persons of that Character only, ap-
pears from such Passages as those, *Without Ho-* Heb. xii.
liness no Man shall see the L ORD: If thou wilt ^{14.} Matth.
enter into Life, keep the Commandments, &c. xix. 17.

THE Concern that GOD has for good Men, and the special Relations in which He stands unto them, are also a Ground for that Hope which they entertain at Death. He is *their God, their Friend, their Father, and will pro-*
vide

vide for them accordingly : But He is so related to none but righteous Souls, or such as do sincerely obey Him.

THE Sum of the Whole then is this, The Sufferings and Merits of CHRIST, are the fundamental, but more remote Ground of this Hope ; for without these there could have been no Place for it : And some comfortable Evidence of his Grace within Men enabling them to obey Him, and so bringing 'em under the Denomination of the *Righteous*, is the next and more immediate Support of it ; *that* distinguishing them as the Persons who are interested in CHRIST ; to whom the Promises are made, and who stand in special Relations to GOD. If the bare Sufferings and Merits of CHRIST, and all that He has done without Men, were a sufficient Ground for this Hope, while they are destitute of that *Righteousness and true Holiness* which the Gospel requires ; any wicked Man would have as much Right to it as righteous Souls ; and it would be as reasonable an Expectation in him as in them : And then there could be no Foundation for a Distinction betwixt the *Hope of the Hypocrite*, and the *Hope of the Righteous* ; and no such Thing as *Presumption* in the World.

THOSE Hopes that they entertain with respect to their Friends and Relatives, are built upon

upon the same Foundation ; supported by the Promise of GOD, and a pleasing Apprehension that *sanctifying Grace* has render'd them righteous; who are already *adult*; and that the same Grace will be bestow'd on those who are as yet in their *Infant-Age*. I proceed,

3dly, To shew what Sort of *an Expectation* this is ; Or what are the recommending Properties of this Hope of the Righteous at Death. They are such as these :

IT is *sure and stedfast*. *Which Hope we have* ^{Heb. vi.} *as an Anchor of the Soul, both sure and stedfast,* 19. says the Apostle. Being so well supported, as you have heard ; it keeps its Ground, notwithstanding the Shocks it may meet with in a dying Season. It does not fail, but is maintain'd in spite of all Opposition.

IT is *peculiar and distinguishing*. An Expectation grounded as this is, belongs to the Righteous and distinguishes the Subject of it as such : For it is by no means *common* to wicked and hypocritical Men. These may *presume* even at Death ; but they cannot *hope* upon *such Reasons* as have been mention'd.

IT is *quieting and refreshing*. It silences the Man from complaining of GOD, and renders him *dumb* in that Respect ; disposing him to a becoming Submission to the Divine Will. It ^{does}

does good like a Medicine ; refreshing his Spirits under all the Uneasiness of a Sick-bed, and frequently reviving him under the Declinings of Nature. Yea,

IT is a joyful Expectation. We read of *Rejoycing in Hope* : And when the Glory of God is one great Thing that we Hope for, it may well be attended with Joy. This indeed is most proper to *Enjoyment* : But our Hope, like our Faith, is the Substance of the Things hoped for ; and does in a Sort make 'em present to us. Besides, we rejoice in that present *Right* which *Grace* has given us to the expected Blessings. Upon the Whole ;

THIS Hope at Death is very seasonable, and admirably suited to the Case : It is a Spring of Consolation in that which is a Time of Trouble : It inspires the Man with Courage, when he is meeting with great Opposition, and has many Enemies to encounter. But this will be further illustrated in what is to follow.

THUS of the first general Head of Discourse ; the second is,

II. To evince the Truth of the Observation in the Text, or to prove that the Matter is thus in Fact. Here I shall just suggest that this appears.

First,

First, FROM Scripture-Testimony. Mark the perfect Man, and behold the Upright ; for the End of that Man is Peace. Such a Peace as is ever attended with this Hope, and is in a great Measure the Result of it. But, the Words of the Text were deliver'd by a Man of the greatest Observation and Wisdom that ever lived ; and who was *divinely inspir'd* when he declared that *the Righteous hath Hope in his Death.*

Psalm
xxxvii.37.

Secondly, THIS Truth is further confirm'd by common Experience. We have frequently heard it attested by such as have been wont to attend the Sick and Death-beds of righteous Persons : And I may appeal to those of you who have had such Opportunities, whether you have not known it to be thus. I bless God, that I am able to say with respect to mine own Experience, That they are more than I can Number ; whom I have seen dying in this Hope ; and some of them greatly Rejoycing in it too.

Thirdly, THE Matter might be argued (if there were need of it, as there is not at present) from the Nature and the Reason of Things. As, from a conjunct Consideration of the divine Revelation concerning the future

Blessedness; of the Nature of the Covenant of Grace: And of that Knowledge and Acquaintance that righteous Persons generally have with these Things; and their *Faith* in Reference to them.

Finally, THE Truth may be confirmed, by accounting for those particular Cases in which the Matter is; or may seem to be otherwise.

"SOME righteous Persons, as we have thought them, have dy'd doubting and desponding; they have sometimes said they had no Hope; their Hearts have meditated Terror; and they have gone off full of Fears and in a Cloud.

IN answer to which I would observe what follows.

SOME of the Instances that are produced upon these Occasions, may be no way to the Purpose. We may Account them righteous Persons who were not so, who only acted a Part, and personated such for a Time, and so were Hypocrites at Heart: And then such Instances are so far from invalidating the Truth of this, and such like Texts; that they do but confirm Others which respect *the Hope of the Hypocrite, when GOD is about to take away his Soul.* We should therefore have good Evidence that we

we mistake not the Case, when we would raise an Objection against a Scripture-Truth. Tho' after all, it is not to be question'd but a good Man may die in Doubts and Fears, and in some Cases have little or no Hope. The Text will admit of some Instances of this Sort; which you may observe to be an *Indefinite* and not an *Universal* Proposition: And tho' *Indefinites* come the nearest to *Universals*, yet they are something short of them. It is not said *all* the righteous, or *every* righteous Man; but only *the righteous* [Indefinitely] *hath Hope in his Death*. And it is as much as we are to expect, if such Sort of Propositions as these prove true *in the main*, and if the Matter of Fact be *generally* so. When it is otherwise we may Account for *that* from such Considerations as these.

THERE may be a *natural Cause* for it. Possibly the good Man may have labour'd all his Days under a *melancholy Constitution*: Or the Nature, and the Continuance of the present *Distemper* may sink or dissipate the animal Spirits (by which the Soul must *Act* as long as it is united with the Body) and deep Melancholy may be the Natural Consequence of this, in those who have not been liable to it before; and a great increase of it, in such as have. In these Cases the

Mind is not capable of viewing Things in their True Light, of considering Matters as they really are, and of reflecting on what has pass'd heretofore; in order to the deducing those just and comfortable Conclusions that are to be drawn from them: And no wonder that there should be a Suspension of Hope in such Cases as these. Or,

THERE may be a *moral Cause* for this. Possibly the good Man has been lately guilty of some great Miscarriage, that he has not repented of as he ought to have done: And this may be *the Rod*; these *the Stripes*, with which GOD visits that Transgression; while his *Loving-kindness* he will not take from him, nor suffer his *Faithfulness* to fail. He's about to receive him into Heaven, but He will make him smart for his folly before hand. Or else, the good Man may be *faultily ignorant* of, or *mistaken* about the Nature of the Covenant of Grace; and his Doubts and Fears may proceed from thence; while the Violence of his Distemper at present, may deprive him of an Opportunity of informing himself better, and of duly considering the Matter.

SUCH Exceptions as these are to be allowed for; But in more common and ordinary Cases, in which there are no such

Reasons

Reasons to be assign'd for the contrary, *the Righteous has Hope in his Death.*

I AM desirous to say something to the third General proposed; and that is to observe,

III. THAT the *emphasis* of the Text lies in this *special Season* of his Hope [the Time of his *Death*;] and to enquire *why* it does so.

Has he not Hope throughout the preceding Part of his Life? And has he not had abundant Ground for it from the very Time that he became a righteous Man? We are not to understand as tho' he were destitute of it till the Time of his Death, and that were *the only Season* in which he enjoys it.

For we find the *living without Hope*, mention'd as one of the most deplorable Circumstances Souls can be in. Eph. ii.

We read much of this Grace throughout the sacred Writings; and may observe that it is frequently spoken of, as a Thing that runs through the Christian's Life, and is of excellent Use, and has a mighty Influence in it. *The Hope of Salvation* is said to be his *Helmet*. It is call'd the *Anchor of the Soul*, which keeps it secure and steady in the Storms of Temptation and Trouble. It is not then reserved for the Time of Death *only*: And

¹ Thess. v.
8.

Heb. vi.
19.

yet

yet the *Emphasis* of the Text lies in this; *The Righteous hath Hope in HIS DEATH.* This intimates, that there is something peculiarly observable with respect to it then; and the following Particulars may inform us what it is.

First, THAT is the most remarkable Season for trying his Hope. Men are wont to be very sincere and serious when they look upon themselves as dying; just on the Borders of Eternity, and about to appear before GOD. This is no Time to trifle, or to dissemble Matters. That they are wont to speak the Truth at such Seasons and to declare Things to be as they really are. Then they who only pretended to Hope as righteous Men do; or who were wont to presume heretofore, discover that that was the Case.

Job xxvii. *What is the Hope of the Hypocrite, tho' he hath gained, when GOD taketh away his Soul?* What is it? Why a mere Delusion;

Chap. xi. a vain Presumption; it is as the giving up
20. of the Ghost. *The Hypocrites hope shall Perish;*
— viii. *It shall be cut off; and his Trust shall be a spiders*

13. *Webb.* When Death comes, his Presumption fails him, and he quits all Pretensions to

Prov. xi. *Hope; and the Expectation of Wrath supplies its Place. The Expectation of the Wicked is Wrath.*

BUT on the other Hand, the Hope of the righteous holds out in this *Time of Tryal*. It is built on such Grounds as Support and Strengthen it in this needful Season. When he dares not trifle, and when Dissimulation could avail him nothing; for he's about to leave the World: And while he is under an awful Apprehension that GOD is now calling his Soul to Himself, He holds fast the Confidence, and the rejoicing of Hope firms Heb. iii. 6. unto the End.

Secondly, IN a dying Season there is the greatest need of such Consolations and Supports as proceed from Christian Hope; and that makes it the more observable that the Righteous is possess'd of it then. I have had Occasion to observe already that, there are many Things in Death, and attending it, very distasteful and grievous to Nature. These make it necessary that the Man be provided with this Hope, by means of which he is render'd equal to the Work, and to the Exercise his GOD does then allot unto him. What tho' I die, says he, and the *Vital Union* be dissolved for a Time? It is in Order to my living a better and an immortal Life. What tho' my Soul be separated from this Body? I shall be admitted into a more intimate Union with Christ the very Soul of my Soul. What tho' I am stripp'd

stripp'd of my worldly Possessions? I have a Treasure laid up in Heaven: *A more enduring Substance: Bags which wax not Old.* I part from these beloved Friends; but I exchange their Society for better. To be with Christ is πολλῷ μᾶλλον χρεῖαν, by much far better: And I am going thither where I shall meet with some as dear, who went before; and whither, I hope, those also whom I now leave behind me, will come e'er long. Some Opposition I meet with from Satan; and some disquietude by Means of it, (may he sometimes say) But my God will render me more than a Conqueror; and conduct me safe and triumphant, into the Regions of everlasting Bliss.

Thirdly, THE TIME of Death is the last Season wherein the Righteous exercise this Hope; and accordingly then it is wont to be more vigorous and lively than heretofore: Hope is only of Use to him on this side Heaven: He has done with it when once he enters there: As Elijah dropt his Mantle when ascending thither, where there is no need of such Cloathing. The Saint will no longer want the Assistance of Hope when once he has actual Possession; is enter'd on Enjoyment, and fully assur'd of it for Eternity too.

Now those Graces which enter not with us into the other World, must reach their *Αὐτὸν*, their highest Pitch in this; and they do so generally when they are about to cease: As the Taper burns with a brighter Flame, and spreads a stronger Light when it is just expiring. When the Saint is about to return *εἰς τὸ οὐρανὸν θεόν*, to the *Divine Original*; he often has a greater Measure of the *Divine Spirit* than at other Times; by whose powerful Energy, Grace is rendered more active and vigorous than formerly. His Hope is invigorated by his nearer Approaches to Fruition; as some Bodies are observ'd to move more swiftly the nearer they come to the Center. And the Objects of his Hope appear with fuller Evidence, as he is hastening towards them. And God does frequently make some special Discoveries to the Soul He is about to receive unto Himself, and thereby puts new Life and Vigour into his Hopes. Upon the Whole,

Fourthly, The righteous Man's Hope at Death is worthy this peculiar Remark because, it affords such a considerable Testimony to the Truth of Religion. The solemn Professions, the strongest Protestations of Men in Health, and under no present Apprehensions of Dying, are seldom allow'd to have that

Weight that is *generally* granted to the bare Allegations of such as *know* themselves to be dying. Others may be suspected of much Partiality to present Interests ; they may have a strong *Byass* from some hidden Reserves, and secret Views, and other Things of that Nature : But Men about to leave the World, are wont to be sincere and open. That in all Ages a special Regard has been had to their last and dying Words ; and a great Stress has been usually laid upon them. And we generally apprehend that dying Men have a clearer Insight into Things, and are wont to discover *greater Degrees* of Understanding and Wisdom than before : And there is this Reason for it, That they are freed at such Times from all those Prejudices which are apt to blind the Mind ; and from that wrong *Byass* which gives such a forcible Turn to the Inclinations.

Now, to see Men in such Circumstances as these, taking Comfort, and Rejoycing in it, that ever they depended and built upon the Principles of Religion ; and so making it appear, that the Truths which they have receiv'd from the Gospel, and a Reflexion on a Life conform'd to the Precepts of it, stand them in Stead at this awful Season, and supply them with a *Hope sure and steadfast*, and which produces a *Joy that is unspeakable* ; even when

Flesh

Flesh and Heart are failing ; and when all other Props and Supports fail too : This is a great Testimony to the Truth of Religion, and therefore 'tis worthy our special Remark.

IV. I SHOULD now *Apply* this Discourse : But I refer it to yourselves to do this more largely, while I only hint a few Things.

WE may infer from the Premises, the Reason why wicked Men do inwardly wish, and oftentimes express a Desire to die the Death of the Righteous. *Let me die the Death of the Righteous, and let my last End be like his* ; is sometimes utter'd at their Lips, and more frequently conceiv'd in their Hearts : And the Reason is because their Death is so hopeful and happy. But that *You* may be secur'd of that, which *They* vainly Wish for, let me exhort you in the next Place,

Numb.
xxiii. 12.

To be Now laying in a good Foundation for this Hope at Death. Receive CHRIST JESUS the Lord, as He is offer'd to you in the Gospel ; cheerfully subject yourselves to his Government ; obey his Commands ; and so live the Life of the Righteous. Frequently meditate on the Efficacy of that Sacrifice He once offer'd ; and the Prevalency of that Intercession He ever lives to make : And consider your sincere Subjection to Him, as the Evi-

dence of your special Interest in These : And from hence you may be able to give a *Reason of the Hope that is in you* at present ; and are like to be secur'd of it in your last Moments, when it will stand you in greater Stead than the largest Affluence of worldly Good : For it will minister Support and Joy, when you can derive no such Things from Riches or Honours, from Friends or Relations ; or any Thing here below. *Lastly,*

LET us with Comfort in ourselves, and with Thankfulness to GOD, reflect on the Hope in which many of our righteous Friends have died. How were they quieted ! How were they refreshed ! How were they delighted with this Hope under Sickness, and Pains, and Death itself ! This leads me to speak of our late worthy Friend, MR. FRASER, whose Death has occasion'd my Discoursing to you from this Place, and from the Subject that has been under Consideration. A Reflection on the good Hope he entertain'd during his last Sickness, and to the Time of his Death ; and which he frequently declar'd to his Friends ; directed my Thoughts to the Text , as soon as I was invited to this Service.

I SHALL not dwell long on his Character ; but will in a few Words recommend him to you as a truly excellent Person, and whom

whom we shall do well to imitate in several Particulars. He was indeed *but a Man*, and *a Man subject to like Passions as we are*: And Jam. v.17. so was *Elias* too, who notwithstanding had a mighty Interest in *God*, and was one of the most eminent *Saints* recorded in Scripture. But I have *two great Things* to tell you concerning our deceas'd *Friend*; and would to *God* they may with equal Truth be said of us when we have finish'd our Course, as he has done his! They are these:

First, THAT he was a righteous Man. And

Secondly, THAT he had Hope in his Death.

First, THAT he was a righteous Man. It is but a lower Instance of this, that he was strictly conscientious in rendering to every Man his Due. From an Observation of his Temper, I have Reason to conclude, that he would rather have *over-paid* much, than have with-held from any the least Part of their Right. But,

He was *righteous*, in the more comprehensive Sense of the Word; as it serves to signify a religious or a truly good Man, whose Heart and Life are conform'd to the Law of *God*, the Rule and Measure of Right. This will appear, if we consider him

in his Personal Character, and in his Relative Capacity.

§. I. As to the Former.

He was very regular and temperate with Respect to the Enjoyments of Life: First Free from those faulty Excesses that too many Professors allow themselves in. But he rose higher than this.

He was a sincere Lover of God. This appear'd to others from the Delight he took in drawing nigh unto Him, and in conversing with Him. He was glad of every Opportunity of going to his Heavenly Father in Prayer. It was a friendly Office, which he usually expected from the Ministers who visited him, (let it be at what time of the Day it would,) to be the Mouth of his Family to God in the Discharge of that Duty. I have often gone into his House, and very seldom came out of it without being engag'd in that good Work, at his Request; and he was wont to express great Satisfaction in his Attendance to it. As another Proof of his Love to God,

He loved the People of God: For as ^{1 Joh. v.} St. John observes, *Every one that loveth him that begat, loveth him also that is begotten of him.* He took Pleasure in the Conversation of good People; and was wont to invite many

many of 'em kindly to his House and Table ; and to entertain 'em with a friendly Freedome there. He had a greater Soul than to confine his Friendship to a Party ; as no Man will do who makes the Gospel his Rule ; and loves others for God's Sake. For then every Thing that is Good and God-like, must recommend 'em to him, of whatever Persuasion they may be with respect to lesser Matters.

HE was wonderfully resign'd to the Divine Will under a Complication of very afflictive Providences. While he was suffering from a lingring + Distemper, which could not be remov'd by that great Variety of Means he made Trial of ; it pleas'd the All-wise God to take away the Desire of his Eyes with a Stroke ; to deprive him of one of the best of Wives, betwixt whom and himself there was a fervent mutual Affection : And who was indeed one of the most excellent Persons that I have been acquainted with. After this, God saw fit to inflict on him * another Distemper while also the Former continu'd ; which could not but be very grievous to Nature ; And when this had brought him to a nearer Prospect of Death and Eternity, he continu'd to speak well of God under all ; to yield

† The Jaundice, * Dropsy.

yield himself up to his Disposals, and to say, *Thy Will be done.*

§. 2. IN his Relative Capacity, he acted up to the Character of a righteous Man.

HE was a dutiful Subject to his Prince. He entirely loved our Excellent Sovereign King **GEORGE**, ever wish'd Him Success; heartily pray'd for, and sincerely rejoyc'd in it.

As he was Master of a Family; He was careful to maintain Family-Religion and the Worship of GOD. This is sadly neglected by many Professors: But he, like pious Joshua, had made it his Resolution, and it was his constant Care, That *himself and his House should serve the LORD*. I am a Witness, that special Seasons were wont to be improv'd for Seeking of GOD; and the Help of his Pastors and others call'd in, upon the Occasion of any particular Emergencies in his Family.

HE was a true and a tender Yoke-Fellow; while GOD continu'd him in that Relation: And a kind and indulgent Parent, always concern'd for the Welfare of his Off-spring, nearer and more remote.

As a Friend, he was ever faithful, free and open. His natural Complexion was such, that it was almost impossible for him to act

a Part, or to put on a Disguise. There is a Sort of a *pleasing Roughness* in some Tempers, that speaks so much Sincerity and Plain-heartedness, as renders it as agreeable to Wise Men as that Smoothness and Lenity that are more natural to Others. It is become a familiar Thing with us to compare the Persons of this Make, to one of the richest Jewels in the World. I am to observe,

Secondly, THAT he had Hope in his Death. This he had in a more than ordinary Degree. When he perceiv'd the nearer Approaches of Death, he set himself to expect it. The Prayers of many were engag'd; in which his Case was recommended, and himself committed to GOD through JESUS CHRIST. While his Distemper was growing upon him, he would be blessing GOD that Matters were well with his Soul; Rejoycing that he was going to his Father's House; And at length he express'd earnest Desires and Longings to be there.

WHAT remains now, but that amidst the Sorrows of his tender Relatives, who are lamenting his Death; They admit this Consideration as a Ground of intermixing Joy, That he is gone to his Father? If ye loved me, said our departing Lord to his Disciples,

ye would rejoice; because I said, I go unto the Father. Now as he was a righteous Man, and a faithful Follower of C H R I S T; so far John xix. let us all be *Followers of him*, who through Faith and Patience, does now, iiberit the Promises.



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